

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
SSM-05 SIG-03 SS-15 INR-10 SSO-00 INRE-00 PM-05
/089 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
S/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

-----063513 110131Z /62

O 110023Z MAR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
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AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS
CIA
USIA
NSC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - MARCH 10

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR MARCH 10,
1978. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS THOMAS RESTON.

Q. AT THIS POINT DO YOU KNOW WHO WILL BE AT THE
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AIRPORT TO GREET MR. BEGIN, IF ANYBODY, MONDAY AFTERNOON?

A. NO, I DON'T. I SUGGEST YOU ASK THE WHITE HOUSE SINCE
THIS IS A STATE VISIT.

Q. WHEN IS ATHERTON COMING?

A. I THINK HE IS ARRIVING HERE AT DULLES SHORTLY
BEFORE 3:00 P.M. TODAY. JUST A MINUTE, LET ME CHECK.
YES, DULLES, SHORTLY BEFORE 3:00 P.M. TODAY. WE DO NOT
EXPECT THAT HE WILL MAKE ANY STATEMENT OR BE
AVAILABLE FOR QUESTIONS.

Q. AMBASSADOR WEST, FORMER GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA,
HAS BEEN UP TO THE HILL AND TALKING TO VARIOUS AIDES
ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST ARMS. THERE ARE VARIOUS ACCOUNTS
OF WHAT HE HAS BEEN SAYING. BUT LET ME ASK YOU,

REPRESENTING THE STATE DEPARTMENT: IS THE STATE
DEPARTMENT THREATENING CONGRESS THAT IF IT VETOED
THE ARAB ARMS SALES, THEY WOULD BE OPENING THE DOOR TO
INCREASED OIL PRICES?

A. THE STATE DEPARTMENT NEVER THREATENS THE CONGRESS.
BUT I AM NOT AWARE OF ANY STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS
WHO ARE THREATENING ANYTHING ON THE HILL -- BUT IF YOU
WOULD LIKE ME TO ASK WHETHER THIS IS A SUBJECT OF
OFFICIAL CONCERN HERE, I WILL BE GLAD TO DO SO.

Q. DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT PERCEIVE THE PROPOSED SALE
OF ARMS TO SAUDI ARABIA AS LINKED IN THE SAUDI
ARABIAN PERCEPTION TO THE OIL QUESTION?

A. I WILL TAKE THE QUESTION.

Q. ON THE MIDDLE EAST -- DR. BRZEZINSKI HAS TOLD THE
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PRESS THAT HE WAS, IN HIS WORDS, "STOMPED ON" DURING
A MEETING WITH THE AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS; AND I WAS
WONDERING IF IN THIS SPIRIT OF CARTER ADMINISTRATION
CANDOR, WHETHER OR NOT SECRETARY VANCE FEELS THAT HE
HAS EVER BEEN "STOMPED ON" BY AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS.

A. NO, I DON'T THINK I WOULD CHARACTERIZE ANY OF
SECRETARY VANCE'S VIEWS ABOUT HIS MEETINGS WITH THE
AMERICAN JEWISH LEADERS IN THAT WAY. NO.

Q. HE HAS NEVER SAID, "I HAVE BEEN STOMPED ON," HAS
HE?

A. I HAVE NEVER HEARD HIM SAY THAT.

Q. IS THE UNITED STATES INTERESTED IN TRYING TO
ARRANGE ANOTHER MEETING BETWEEN MR. BEGIN AND
PRESIDENT SADAT?

A. I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FOR YOU ON THAT.

Q. I DON'T UNDERSTAND THAT KIND OF ANSWER. THERE ARE
REPORTS THAT -- VARYING REPORTS -- REPORTS THAT BEGIN
IS INTERESTED IN SUCH A MEETING, THAT HE WILL ASK THE
UNITED STATES TO ARRANGE SUCH A MEETING. BUT I DON'T
WANT TO APPROACH IT FROM THAT VIEW POINT. I WANT TO
APPROACH IT FROM A U.S. VIEWPOINT. DOES THE UNITED
STATES THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR BEGIN AND

SADAT TO MEET AGAIN SOON? I CAN'T SEE WHY YOU CAN'T
DEAL WITH THAT, OR AT LEAST TRY TO FIND AN ANSWER.

A. I WOULD BE HAPPY TO TRY TO FIND AN ANSWER, BUT I
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AM BACK TO THIS OLD DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE AGAIN, WHICH
IS THE UNITED STATES WANTS TO DO WHATEVER POSSIBLE AND
WHATEVER IS APPROPRIATE TO MOVE THIS PROCESS ALONG.

IF, AS A RESULT OF THE MEETINGS BETWEEN PRESIDENT CARTER
AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN, IT SEEMS THAT SUCH A MEETING
WOULD BE USEFUL OR APPROPRIATE OR WE COULD PLAY SOME
USEFUL OR APPROPRIATE ROLE IN ARRANGING IT, THEN AT
THAT POINT I THINK WE MIGHT GO AHEAD. BUT I CAN'T
SPECULATE ON WHETHER WE WILL DO THAT OR NOT.

VANCE

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